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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 000647

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/20/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PARM](#) [CH](#) [TW](#) [IT](#) [EUN](#) [HUMAN](#) [RIGHTS](#)

SUBJECT: EU-CHINA ARMS EMBARGO - ITALIANS PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY

REF: SECSTATE 33385

CLASSIFIED BY: CHARGE EMIL SKODON FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) CHARGE, ACCOMPANIED BY POLOFFS MET WITH AND DELIVERED REF POINTS TO MFA U/S FOR ASIA AND HUMAN RIGHTS, MARGHERITA BONIVER. BONIVER AGREED THAT CHINESE PROGRESS ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAS BEEN LESS THAN SATISFACTORY AND THAT LIFTING THE EMBARGO AT THIS TIME WOULD SEND THE WRONG MESSAGE TO THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT AND COULD POSE A DANGER IN REGARDS TO TAIWAN. SHE STATED THAT SHE WAS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING ITALY'S FINAL POSITION ON LIFTING THE EMBARGO BUT THAT SHE WOULD FORWARD OUR CONCERNS TO FM FRATTINI AND ALSO SPEAK TO HIM PERSONALLY.

12. (C) BONIVER SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN A SHIFT IN THE EU WITH MORE COUNTRIES, INCLUDING ITALY, FAVORING A REEVALUATION OF THE ISSUE, A DECISION TO LIFT THE EMBARGO WOULD NOT BE WELL RECEIVED BY PARLIAMENT NOR BY THE PUBLIC IN ITALY OR IN MANY OTHER EU COUNTRIES. BECAUSE OF THIS, ANY DECISION TO LIFT THE EMBARGO WOULD REQUIRE A SIGNIFICANT LINKAGE TO IMPROVEMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND, ACCORDING TO BONIVER, WOULD NOT OCCUR IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IN RESPONSE TO CHARGE'S QUESTION, SHE SAID ANY LIFTING CERTAINLY WOULD NOT HAPPEN AS EARLY AS APRIL (WHEN EU FMS ARE SCHEDULED TO MEET).

13. (C) CHARGE RESPONDED THAT THE CHINESE HAD NOT DELIVERED ON THE COMMITMENTS MADE AT THE US-CHINA HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUE IN DECEMBER 2002 AND THAT THE SAME COULD HAPPEN WITH ANY LINKAGES MADE BY THE EU. HE ADDED THAT, BECAUSE OF THIS LACK OF ACTION, THE US WAS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING SPONSORING A UNCHR RESOLUTION IN 2004. BONIVER AGREED THAT THE EU MUST BE CAREFUL AND FIRM WITH THE CHINESE AND THAT ITALY WOULD CONSIDER A RESOLUTION "IN DUE TIME."
SKODON

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